

**Thomas Jefferson to William Clark, September 12,
1825, from Thomas Jefferson and Early Western
Explorers, Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W. Gawalt,
Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

Thomas Jefferson to William Clark

Monto.[12 September 1825]

Dear Genl.

I presume you have heard that we have established in your native state an University for the purposes of educn. on a scale of the first order. We were much squibbed for having sought some Professors of the first advancement in science from countries in advance os us. Some of our sister instns. in this country would have wished us with their refuse profesors to have place ourselves at the tail instead of the head of the line. We however have no cause to repent of the course we have pursued. The 5 Professors whom we obtained from abroad prove to be as happy a selection as we could ourselves have wished. Of the 1st order of science in their respective lines, accomodating themselves cheerfully to the new circumstances in which they are placed and zealous to promote the instn. the 3 professors of our own country are too well known to need particular characterization. We have something upwards of 100 students of from 16 to 26 yrs of age and for order and good conduct, they have been no where surpassed. The Professors themselves say this, and tell me furthr that about 1/3 of them are close laborious students, another 3d satisfactory so, and 1/3 only disposed to be idle & do little. And on the whole this instn. is going on with a degree of prosperity beyond all my expectns. I inclose you a hand bill containing more particular details, as some youths from your quarter may perhaps be disposed to come and finish here. As I think many will from the Souther &

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Western states generally. Among other objects of our instn is the collection of a Museum of Nat. hist. of Minerals, & of curiosities in general of art or nature. Those of Indian arts stand very near to nature itself. Your situation is so favble for assisting us in this collection that I cannot help solliciting your attention to us. Born, I believe & raised, I am sure, within sight of our University, you must feel doubt sympathies for the country and nbhood of your birth. Our county (of Alb.) subscribed itself 30 M.D. towds this instn. From you, one it's sons of whom it is proud, they hope they may ask contribns. also not of money but of those things which your situan. peculiarly places within your reach. We would not trouble you for bulky and heavy articles, which might be too cumbersome and expensive in carriage. Nor yet such as are liable to be destroyed by worms, moisture etc. but for chrystals minerals small Indian worthy and other curiosities which might be easily transported and preserved. Perhaps you may have in your own collection have duplicates of some things of which you could spare one, or things too common to be curious there, but rare and curious here. In short you know our country so well as to be at no loss to distinguish what would be acceptable here. I give to the Univ. the whole of my collections which is considerable and much indeed of which was furnished me from the expedn. of yourself & Govr. Lewis to the Pacific. If you have a Correspdt. at N.O. he would be a safe intermediate, and might address articles to me as Rector of the Univ. of Virga. the way of to care of the collector of any of our middle Atlantic ports who will pay expences and forward them on to Richmd. Addressing to Richmd. direct, to the care of Col. B. P. of that place would be safest. Should you ever revisit your native state I shall be very happy to receive you at Monto. and should take great pleasure in accompanying you to our Univ. in the mean time accept my assurances of my contind. frdship and great respect.

FC in the hand of Thomas Jefferson in the Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress. Endorsed by Jefferson: "Clarke Genl. Wm. Sep.12.25"